

**Claims:**

- 1 **1.** A multi-descriptive encoder for generating a plurality of multi-descriptive bit  
2 streams from a single source signal, the encoder comprising:  
3 a source signal input port for supplying the source signal;  
4 a first coder applied to the source signal input port, the first coder for generating  
5 a first multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal, the first coder employing a  
6 first coding algorithm which includes a first quantization process in which a first data  
7 value based on the source signal is coded with use of a corresponding first quantized  
8 data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding first quantization error representative of  
9 a difference between said first data value and said first quantized data value; and  
10 a second coder applied to the source signal input port, the second coder for  
11 generating a second multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal, the second  
12 coder employing a second coding algorithm which includes a second quantization  
13 process in which a second data value, based on the source signal and corresponding to  
14 said first data value, is coded with use of a corresponding second quantized data value,  
15 thereby resulting in a corresponding second quantization error representative of a  
16 difference between said second data value and said second quantized data value,  
17 wherein said second quantized data value as produced by said second  
18 quantization process is based at least in part on said first quantization error resulting  
19 from said first quantization process.
- 1 **2.** The encoder of claim 1 wherein said first coding algorithm and said second  
2 coding algorithm differ in at most the corresponding quantization processes included  
3 therein.
- 1 **3.** The encoder of claim 1 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.
- 1 **4.** The encoder of claim 1 wherein said second quantized data value as produced  
2 by said second quantization process is determined so that said second quantization error

3 resulting from said second quantization process is such that if combined with said first  
4 quantization error resulting from said first quantization process to produce a net  
5 quantization error, said net quantization error will be less than said first quantization  
6 error.

1 **5.** The encoder of claim 1 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2 quantization process each select said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
3 predetermined set of quantization values.

1 **6.** The encoder of claim 5 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2 each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said corresponding  
3 quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar quantization values,  
4 wherein said first data value based on the source signal and said second data value  
5 based on the source signal are equal to a common scalar value representative of a  
6 portion of said source signal, wherein said first quantized data value is selected from  
7 said set of scalar quantization values as an approximation to said common scalar value,  
8 and wherein said second quantized data value is selected as a neighboring value in said  
9 set of quantization values to said first quantized data value when said common scalar  
10 value is closer to an average of said first quantized data value and said neighboring  
11 value than to any value in said set of quantization values.

1 **7.** The encoder of claim 5 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2 each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said corresponding  
3 quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar quantization values,  
4 wherein said first data value based on the source signal is equal to a scalar value  
5 representative of a portion of said source signal and said second data value based on the  
6 source signal is equal to said first data value offset by a fixed predetermined amount,  
7 and wherein said first quantized data value is selected from said set of scalar  
8 quantization values as an approximation to said first data value and said second  
9 quantized data value is selected from said set of scalar quantization values as an  
10 approximation to said second data value.

1    **8.**     The encoder of claim 5 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2    each comprise an adaptive differential pulse code modulation scheme which selects said  
3    corresponding quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar  
4    quantization values, and wherein said second quantized data value is determined such  
5    that said first quantization error and said second quantization error are scalar arithmetic  
6    values having opposite sign.

1    **9.**     The encoder of claim 5 wherein said first and second coding algorithms each  
2    comprise a code excited linear predictive coding scheme, wherein said first and second  
3    quantization processes select said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
4    predetermined set of excitation vectors, and wherein said second quantization process  
5    selects a different excitation vector than said first quantization process.

1    **10.**    The encoder of claim 1 further comprising means for modifying said first and  
2    second quantization processes in a periodic fashion, such that after a first predetermined  
3    amount of time,

4            (i) said first quantization process produces a subsequent first quantized data  
5    value based at least in part on a corresponding subsequent second quantization error  
6    resulting from said second quantization process, and

7            (ii) said second quantization process produces a subsequent second quantized  
8    data value not based on a corresponding subsequent first quantization error resulting  
9    from said first quantization process; and

10          after a second predetermined amount of time,

11          (iii) said second quantization process produces a further subsequent second  
12    quantized data value based at least in part on a corresponding further subsequent first  
13    quantization error resulting from said first quantization process, and

14          (iv) said first quantization process produces a further subsequent first quantized  
15    data value not based on a corresponding further subsequent second quantization error  
16    resulting from said second quantization process.

1 11. The encoder of claim 10 wherein said first predetermined amount of time and  
2 said second predetermined amount of time are equal.

1 12. The encoder of claim 10 wherein said first and second predetermined amounts  
2 of time are based on quality levels associated with a first communications channel used  
3 for transmitting said first multi-descriptive bit stream and a second communications  
4 channel used for transmitting said second multi-descriptive bit stream, respectively.

1 13. The encoder of claim 12 wherein a ratio of said first predetermined amount of  
2 time divided by said second predetermined amount of time is approximately equal to a  
3 ratio of an estimated probability of a frame erasure occurring in a transmission across  
4 said second communications channel divided by an estimated probability of a frame  
5 erasure occurring in a transmission across said first communications channel.

1 ~~14.~~ A multi-descriptive encoder for generating a plurality of multi-descriptive bit  
2 streams from a single source signal, the encoder comprising:  
3 a source signal input port;  
4 a first coder applied to the source signal input port, the first coder for generating  
5 a first multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal; and  
6 a second coder applied to the source signal input port, the second coder for  
7 generating a second multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal,  
8 wherein said first multi-descriptive bit stream and said second multi-descriptive  
9 bit stream differ, and wherein each bit stream is decodable by an identical decoding  
10 algorithm to generate a corresponding different reconstruction of said source signal.

1 15. The encoder of claim 14 wherein said first coder employs a first coding  
2 algorithm including a first quantization process and said second coder employs a second  
3 coding algorithm including a second quantization process, and wherein the first and  
4 second coding algorithms differ in at most the corresponding quantization processes  
5 included therein.

1   **16.**    The encoder of claim 14 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2   quantization process each select corresponding quantized data values from a single  
3   predetermined set of quantization values.

1   **17.**    The encoder of claim 16 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2   quantization process each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said  
3   corresponding quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar  
4   quantization values.

1   **18.**    The encoder of claim 16 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2   quantization process each comprise an adaptive differential pulse code modulation  
3   scheme which selects said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
4   predetermined set of scalar quantization values.

1   **19.**    The encoder of claim 16 wherein said first and second coding algorithms each  
2   comprise a code excited linear predictive coding scheme and wherein said first and  
3   second quantization processes select said corresponding quantized data values from a  
4   single predetermined set of excitation vectors.

1   **20.**    The encoder of claim 14 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.

1   ~~**21.**~~   A multi-descriptive decoder system for decoding a plurality of multi-descriptive  
2   bit streams each comprising a representation of a single source signal and for producing  
3   a single reconstructed source signal therefrom, the decoder system comprising:  
4       a plurality of decoders corresponding to the plurality of multi-descriptive bit  
5       streams to be decoded, each of said decoders generating a corresponding decoded bit  
6       stream; and  
7       a mixer for combining said decoded bit streams to produce the reconstructed  
8       source signal,  
9       wherein the plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams have been generated by a  
10   multi-descriptive encoder which comprises,

11 (i) a source signal input port for supplying a single source signal,  
12 (ii) a first coder applied to the source signal input port, the first coder for  
13 generating a first multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal, the first coder  
14 employing a first coding algorithm which includes a first quantization process in which  
15 a first data value based on the source signal is coded with use of a corresponding first  
16 quantized data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding first quantization error  
17 representative of a difference between said first data value and said first quantized data  
18 value, and  
19 (iii) a second coder applied to the source signal input port, the second coder for  
20 generating a second multi-descriptive bit stream from the source signal, the second  
21 coder employing a second coding algorithm which includes a second quantization  
22 process in which a second data value, based on the source signal and corresponding to  
23 said first data value, is coded with use of a corresponding second quantized data value,  
24 thereby resulting in a corresponding second quantization error representative of a  
25 difference between said second data value and said second quantized data value,  
26 and wherein said second quantized data value as produced by said second  
27 quantization process is based at least in part on said first quantization error resulting  
28 from said first quantization process.

1 **22.** The decoder system of claim 21 wherein said source signal comprises a speech  
2 signal.

1 **23.** The decoder system of claim 21 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2 streams have been encoded with use of a pulse code modulation scheme.

1 **24.** The decoder system of claim 21 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2 streams have been encoded with use of an adaptive differential pulse code modulation  
3 scheme.

1 **25.** The decoder system of claim 21 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2 streams have been encoded with use of a code excited linear predictive coding scheme.

1   **26.**    The decoder system of claim 21 wherein each of said plurality of decoders has a  
2   corresponding internal state thereof, and wherein said internal state corresponding to a  
3   first one of said plurality of decoders is updated based on said internal state  
4   corresponding to another one of said plurality of decoders when said multi-descriptive  
5   bit stream corresponding to said first one of said plurality of decoders experiences a  
6   frame erasure.

1   **27.**    A multi-descriptive decoder system for decoding a plurality of distinct multi-  
2   descriptive bit streams each comprising a different representation of a single source  
3   signal and for producing a single reconstructed source signal therefrom, the decoder  
4   system comprising:

5           a plurality of decoders corresponding to the plurality of multi-descriptive bit  
6   streams to be decoded, each of said decoders generating a corresponding plurality of  
7   decoded bit streams, each of said plurality of decoders employing an identical decoding  
8   algorithm; and

9           a mixer for combining said plurality of decoded bit streams to produce the  
10   reconstructed source signal.

1   **28.**    The decoder system of claim 27 wherein said source signal comprises a speech  
2   signal.

1   **29.**    The decoder system of claim 27 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2   streams have been encoded with use of a pulse code modulation scheme.

1   **30.**    The decoder system of claim 27 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2   streams have been encoded with use of an adaptive differential pulse code modulation  
3   scheme.

1   **31.**    The decoder system of claim 27 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit  
2   streams have been encoded with use of a code excited linear predictive coding scheme.

1 32. The decoder system of claim 27 wherein each of said plurality of decoders has a  
2 corresponding internal state thereof, and wherein said internal state corresponding to a  
3 first one of said plurality of decoders is updated based on said internal state  
4 corresponding to another one of said plurality of decoders when said multi-descriptive  
5 bit stream corresponding to said first one of said plurality of decoders experiences a  
6 frame erasure.

1 33. A method for performing multi-descriptive encoding of a single source signal  
2 and for generating a plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams therefrom, the method  
3 comprising the steps of:

4 coding the source signal with a first coder to generate a first multi-descriptive bit  
5 stream, the first coder employing a first coding algorithm which includes a first  
6 quantization process in which a first data value based on the source signal is coded with  
7 use of a corresponding first quantized data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding  
8 first quantization error representative of a difference between said first data value and  
9 said first quantized data value; and

10 coding the source signal with a second coder to generate a second multi-  
11 descriptive bit stream, the second coder employing a second coding algorithm which  
12 includes a second quantization process in which a second data value, based on the  
13 source signal and corresponding to said first data value, is coded with use of a  
14 corresponding second quantized data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding second  
15 quantization error representative of a difference between said second data value and  
16 said second quantized data value,

17 wherein said second quantized data value as produced by said second  
18 quantization process is based at least in part on said first quantization error resulting  
19 from said first quantization process.

1 34. The method of claim 33 wherein said first coding algorithm and said second  
2 coding algorithm differ in at most the corresponding quantization processes included  
3 therein.



1    **35.**    The method of claim 33 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.

1    **36.**    The method of claim 33 wherein said second quantized data value as produced  
2 by said second quantization process is determined so that said second quantization error  
3 resulting from said second quantization process is such that if combined with said first  
4 quantization error resulting from said first quantization process to produce a net  
5 quantization error, said net quantization error will be less than said first quantization  
6 error.

1    **37.**    The method of claim 33 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2 quantization process each select said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
3 predetermined set of quantization values.

1    **38.**    The method of claim 37 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2 each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said corresponding  
3 quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar quantization values,  
4 wherein said first data value based on the source signal and said second data value  
5 based on the source signal are equal to a common scalar value representative of a  
6 portion of said source signal, wherein said first quantized data value is selected from  
7 said set of scalar quantization values as an approximation to said common scalar value,  
8 and wherein said second quantized data value is selected as a neighboring value in said  
9 set of quantization values to said first quantized data value when said common scalar  
10 value is closer to an average of said first quantized data value and said neighboring  
11 value than to any value in said set of quantization values.

1    **39.**    The method of claim 37 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2 each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said corresponding  
3 quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar quantization values,  
4 wherein said first data value based on the source signal is equal to a scalar value  
5 representative of a portion of said source signal and said second data value based on the

6 source signal is equal to said first data value offset by a fixed predetermined amount,  
7 and wherein said first quantized data value is selected from said set of scalar  
8 quantization values as an approximation to said first data value and said second  
9 quantized data value is selected from said set of scalar quantization values as an  
10 approximation to said second data value.

1 **40.** The method of claim 37 wherein said first and second quantization processes  
2 each comprise an adaptive differential pulse code modulation scheme which selects said  
3 corresponding quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar  
4 quantization values, and wherein said second quantized data value is determined such  
5 that said first quantization error and said second quantization error are scalar arithmetic  
6 values having opposite sign.

1 **41.** The method of claim 37 wherein said first and second coding algorithms each  
2 comprise a code excited linear predictive coding scheme, wherein said first and second  
3 quantization processes select said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
4 predetermined set of excitation vectors, and wherein said second quantization process  
5 selects a different excitation vector than said first quantization process.

1 **42.** The method of claim 33 further comprising the step of modifying said first and  
2 second quantization processes in a periodic fashion, such that after a first predetermined  
3 amount of time,

4 (i) said first quantization process produces a subsequent first quantized data  
5 value based at least in part on a corresponding subsequent second quantization error  
6 resulting from said second quantization process, and

7 (ii) said second quantization process produces a subsequent second quantized  
8 data value not based on a corresponding subsequent first quantization error resulting  
9 from said first quantization process; and

10 after a second predetermined amount of time,

11 (iii) said second quantization process produces a further subsequent second  
12 quantized data value based at least in part on a corresponding further subsequent first  
13 quantization error resulting from said first quantization process, and

14 (iv) said first quantization process produces a further subsequent first quantized  
15 data value not based on a corresponding further subsequent second quantization error  
16 resulting from said second quantization process.

1 **43.** The method of claim 42 wherein said first predetermined amount of time and  
2 said second predetermined amount of time are equal.

1 **44.** The method of claim 42 wherein said first and second predetermined amounts of  
2 time are based on quality levels associated with a first communications channel used for  
3 transmitting said first multi-descriptive bit stream and a second communications  
4 channel used for transmitting said second multi-descriptive bit stream, respectively.

1 **45.** The method of claim 44 wherein a ratio of said first predetermined amount of  
2 time divided by said second predetermined amount of time is approximately equal to a  
3 ratio of an estimated probability of a frame erasure occurring in a transmission across  
4 said second communications channel divided by an estimated probability of a frame  
5 erasure occurring in a transmission across said first communications channel.

1 **46.** A method for performing multi-descriptive encoding of a single source signal  
2 and for generating a plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams therefrom, the method  
3 comprising the steps of:

4 coding the source signal with a first coder to generate a first multi-descriptive bit  
5 stream therefrom; and

6 coding the source signal with a second coder to generate a second multi-  
7 descriptive bit stream therefrom,

8 wherein said first multi-descriptive bit stream and said second multi-descriptive  
9 bit stream differ, and wherein each bit stream is decodable by an identical decoding  
10 algorithm to generate a corresponding different reconstruction of said source signal.

1 47. The method of claim 46 wherein said first coder employs a first coding  
2 algorithm including a first quantization process and said second coder employs a second  
3 coding algorithm including a second quantization process, and wherein the first and  
4 second coding algorithms differ in at most the corresponding quantization processes  
5 included therein.

1 48. The method of claim 46 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2 quantization process each select corresponding quantized data values from a single  
3 predetermined set of quantization values.

1 49. The method of claim 48 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2 quantization process each comprise a pulse code modulation scheme which selects said  
3 corresponding quantized data values from a single predetermined set of scalar  
4 quantization values.

1 50. The method of claim 48 wherein said first quantization process and said second  
2 quantization process each comprise an adaptive differential pulse code modulation  
3 scheme which selects said corresponding quantized data values from a single  
4 predetermined set of scalar quantization values.

1 51. The method of claim 48 wherein said first and second coding algorithms each  
2 comprise a code excited linear predictive coding scheme and wherein said first and  
3 second quantization processes select said corresponding quantized data values from a  
4 single predetermined set of excitation vectors.

1 52. The method of claim 46 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.

1 ~~53.~~ A method of decoding a plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams each  
2 comprising a representation of a single common source signal and producing a single  
3 reconstructed source signal therefrom, the method comprising the steps of:

4 decoding the plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams with a corresponding  
5 plurality of decoders to generate a corresponding plurality of decoded bit streams; and  
6 combining said decoded bit streams to produce the reconstructed source signal,  
7 wherein the plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams have been generated by a  
8 method for multi-descriptive encoding which comprises the steps of,

9 (i) coding the source signal with a first coder to generate a first multi-descriptive  
10 bit stream, the first coder employing a first coding algorithm which includes a first  
11 quantization process in which a first data value based on the source signal is coded with  
12 use of a corresponding first quantized data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding  
13 first quantization error representative of a difference between said first data value and  
14 said first quantized data value, and

15 (ii) coding the source signal with a second coder to generate a second multi-  
16 descriptive bit stream, the second coder employing a second coding algorithm which  
17 includes a second quantization process in which a second data value, based on the  
18 source signal and corresponding to said first data value, is coded with use of a  
19 corresponding second quantized data value, thereby resulting in a corresponding second  
20 quantization error representative of a difference between said second data value and  
21 said second quantized data value,

22 and wherein said second quantized data value as produced by said second  
23 quantization process is based at least in part on said first quantization error resulting  
24 from said first quantization process.

1 **54.** The method of claim 53 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.

1 **55.** The method of claim 53 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2 have been encoded with use of a pulse code modulation scheme.

1 **56.** The method of claim 53 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2 have been encoded with use of an adaptive differential pulse code modulation scheme.

1   **57.**    The method of claim 53 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2   have been encoded with use of a code excited linear predictive coding scheme.

1   **58.**    The method of claim 53 wherein each of said plurality of decoders has a  
2   corresponding internal state thereof, and wherein said method further comprises the step  
3   of updating said internal state corresponding to a first one of said plurality of decoders  
4   based on said internal state corresponding to another one of said plurality of decoders  
5   when said multi-descriptive bit stream corresponding to said first one of said plurality  
6   of decoders experiences a frame erasure.

1   ~~**59.**~~   A method of decoding a plurality of distinct multi-descriptive bit streams each  
2   comprising a different representation of a single common source signal and producing a  
3   single reconstructed source signal therefrom, the method comprising the steps of:  
4        decoding said plurality of multi-descriptive bit streams with a corresponding  
5        plurality of decoders to generate a corresponding plurality of decoded bit streams, each  
6        of said plurality of decoders employing an identical decoding algorithm; and  
7        combining said plurality of decoded bit streams to produce the reconstructed  
8        source signal.

1   **60.**    The method of claim 59 wherein said source signal comprises a speech signal.

1   **61.**    The method of claim 59 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2   have been encoded with use of a pulse code modulation scheme.

1   **62.**    The method of claim 59 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2   have been encoded with use of an adaptive differential pulse code modulation scheme.

1   **63.**    The method of claim 59 wherein said each of said multi-descriptive bit streams  
2   have been encoded with use of a code excited linear predictive coding scheme.

1   **64.**   The method of claim 59 wherein each of said plurality of decoders has a  
2   corresponding internal state thereof, and wherein said method further comprises the step  
3   of updating said internal state corresponding to a first one of said plurality of decoders  
4   based on said internal state corresponding to another one of said plurality of decoders  
5   when said multi-descriptive bit stream corresponding to said first one of said plurality  
6   of decoders experiences a frame erasure.